

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The City of Takoma Park is accepting proposals for the following:

Community Health Needs Focus Group

For technical information please contact:

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Purpose

This Request for Proposals (“RFP”) is seeking a qualified firm to conduct a health needs assessment for the City of Takoma Park and to provide recommendations based on the collected data. It is expected that this evaluation and analysis will utilize focus groups to be developed involving residents representing the diverse population of our community.

Background

The City of Takoma Park (“City”) is an ethnically and economically diverse community, located in the southern region of Montgomery County. Home to approximately 17,300 people, the City provides the comfort of a small town with the luxuries of a big city. 59% of the households are occupied by renters, while 41% own their home.

On September 22, 2005, the Board of Trustees for Adventist HealthCare decided to move Washington Adventist Hospital outside the City limits where it had been for nearly a century. In light of this announcement, the City Council voted to establish the Health Services Impact Committee (hereafter, HSIC), which consists of members whose professions are related to the health care industry. HSIC is charged with the responsibility of advising the City Council on matters related to the health care needs of Takoma Park residents.

In order for HSIC to perform these duties, information relating to health care supply, demand, and access in Takoma Park must be collected. HSIC created an electronic survey, which will be distributed to the residents who participate in various neighborhood and civic associations. However, it is imperative to collect data from residents who are not easily reachable through electronic media or who are not actively involved in the political life of Takoma Park; these residents are more likely to be elderly, disabled, or to speak a first language other than English, including Spanish, Amharic, or French. HSIC has concluded that focus groups could be an alternate vehicle to gather information from these residents. The leaders of prominent non-profit organizations and opinion leaders would also be sought as participants in focus group discussions.

Due to our interest in seeing these facilitated focus groups organized and implemented quickly, the City is interested in responses from reputable firms, having experience with this methodology and having done research in the Maryland area in the past. Once a firm is selected, arrangements will be made for a representative of the firm to meet with the members of HSIC and the City staff person assigned to work with HSIC. The chosen firm will also receive a copy of the electronic Health Care survey created by HSIC, a list of contact persons representing various organizations serving residents of the City, and, if available, relating to health care in

Takoma Park, Maryland.

Scope of Work

1. This RFP seeks a firm to conduct focus group sessions involving residents living in and around Takoma Park, who may speak English, Spanish, Amharic, or French. Non-profit organization directors and local leaders will also be invited to participate.
2. The firm must provide the City with a schedule of site locations, date, groups, and progress reports on a regular basis.
3. The firm must provide the City with a detailed script for each focus group meeting in advance of the scheduled focus group meeting.
4. The firm will be responsible for making arrangements and recruiting focus groups participants and providing all necessary arrangements and incentives, if necessary, to ensure successful meetings. The City Manager or the assigned staff person and HSIC will provide assistance if deemed necessary.
5. All focus group sessions will be audio or video taped. The firm will utilize content analysis methodologies to assist the focus groups messages and themes. The firm will provide brief reports (approximately 1-5 pages in length) to the City and HSIC on the principal themes and findings of each focus group.
6. The firm must provide a final report to the City. The final report will summarize and analyze data collected through the focus groups and provide policy recommendations.

Receipt of Proposals

- a. Bid proposals or amendments received after the proposal due date will not be considered.
- b. Properly marked bid proposals received prior to the proposal due date will be securely kept unopened in the office of the City management assistant. The management assistant will determine when the specified time has arrived and, with the following exception, no bid proposal shall be accepted thereafter. Should a bid arrive by United States mail after the designated proposal due date, but before an award is made, and the management assistant is satisfied that bid proposal was mailed prior to the proposal due date the non-timely arrival of the bid proposal was solely due to delay in the mail service beyond the bidder's control, it may be received and considered.

- c. No liability shall be attached to the City or appointed City representative for the premature opening of an improperly addressed or improperly identified bid proposal.
- d. Unless otherwise specified by the City, all bid proposals submitted in response to this RFP shall be binding for City acceptance for sixty (60) days from the proposal due date.

Proposal Review Process

The City Management Assistant and HSIC will evaluate proposals in accordance with the requirements provided in this RFP and make a recommendation to the City Council. Personal interviews and negotiations may be conducted with one or more bidders, at the discretion of the City.

Award or Rejection of Proposals

- a. A contract shall be awarded to a responsive and responsible bidder. The City reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to: 1) accept proposals in part or as a whole; 2) reject any or all proposals; 3) readvertise the RFP; 4) waive any required information set forth in this RFP; 5) select a proposal and make a contract award which best serves the most effective and efficient completion of the contract work and the interests of the City; and/or 6) reject any and all proposals that comply with these RFP specifications, or to accept a higher bid proposal that complies, provided that, in the judgment of the City, the work or items offered under the higher bid proposal have additional values or functions justifying the difference in price.
- b. The City also reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject the proposal of a bidder who has previously failed to satisfactorily perform or to timely complete a contract of a similar nature (whether for the City or for a different jurisdiction or entity) or a proposal of a bidder who, upon investigation, is not in position to perform the contract.
- c. A written notice of the award (or acceptance of the bid) will be provided to the successful bidder within 60 days after the proposal due date. The successful bidder will be expected to sign the City's form contract as written.

Proposal Outline

A responsive bid proposal to this RFP should provide concise information describing the following:

1. Specific process that will be followed in order to address the project objectives and complete the contract work;
2. Proposed project and team organization;
3. Proposed methodology for the focus groups, including plans for recruiting participants, ensuring adequate participation, structuring each focus group session, and recording and transcribing all proceedings;
4. Overall time estimates for completing the focus groups and submitting a written analysis of the data and final report to the City;
5. Job descriptions and credentials of the staff to be assigned to the contract work, including the professional qualifications and experience of key staff members and of each such individual's ability and experience in conducting focus groups;
6. References available for contact, including the names, physical and electronic addresses, and telephone numbers, of a minimum of three (3) clients for whom the bidder has conducted similar services.
7. A minimum of two examples of other focus group reports prepared by the bidder.
8. Contract price, including all pricing and payment terms. The proposal must specify the total price for completion of the contract work, along with details of how the contract price was determined (*i.e.*, hourly rates of staff to be assigned to the contract work, fixed sums or estimated number of hours for certain tasks or services performed, etc.).
9. Proposals must be dated and signed, under penalties of perjury, by the owner or a responsible member, partner, or officer of the bidder. The type of entity and state of organization for non-individual bidders must be specified, along with the name, title, and authority of the person signing the proposal for the bidder.

Proposal Inquiries

Questions about this RFP may be submitted by e-mail no later than Friday, February 8, 2008 at 1:00 pm EST to VenitaG@takomagov.org. Questions timely submitted will be responded to by Tuesday, February 12, 2008. Answers will be posted on the City website on <http://www.takomaparkmd.gov/HSIC>.

Proposal Due Date

Bid proposals in response to this RFP must be submitted no later than Thursday, February 14, 2008 at 3:00 pm EST to Venita-Enola George, Management Assistant, City of Takoma Park, 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912. Electronic versions of the bid proposals will be accepted, but must be submitted no later than Thursday, February 14, 2008 at 3:00 pm EST to VenitaG@takomagov.org. Bidders must submit any and all exceptions to conditions or specifications of this RFP in writing as part of the proposal submission.

Performance Bonds

The City reserves the right to require a performance bond, as it deems to be necessary and in the City's best interest, at time of contact.

Bidding and Payment

Invoice for payment for contract work must be submitted in duplicate. An original and one copy shall be forwarded to the City, payment for which will be made only upon acceptance of the work or items represented by the invoice. Payment terms are net 30 unless special arrangements have been established.

Subcontractors

Bidders may not assign or sublet the contract work or any part thereof without the prior written consent of the City Manager, or his or her duly appointed representative. Bidders must request approval in writing for any such assignment or subcontracting, including the name of such assignee or subcontractor(s) he or she intends to use, the specific work or materials to be furnished by such assignee or subcontractor, the assignee or subcontractor's place of business, and other information as the City Manager may require.

Bidders shall not legally or equitably assign any of the monies payable under the contract, or its claim thereto, unless by and with the written consent of the City Manager.

Compliance with Specifications

Bidders shall abide by and comply with the true intent of the specifications of this RFP and not take advantage of any unintentional error or omission.

Bidder's Certification of Noninvolvement in the Nuclear Weapons Industry

In order to comply with the provisions of Takoma Park Code Chapter 14.04, Nuclear-Free Zone, section 14.04.060.C, bidders must certify to the City Clerk, by a notarized statement, that it is not knowingly or intentionally a nuclear weapons producer.

Conflict of Interest

No employee or officer of the City, or his or her immediate family member, shall be admitted to any share or part of this contract or to any benefit that may arise therefrom.

Indemnification and Insurance

The contractor is responsible for any loss, personal injury, death, property damages, and any other damages of every name and description that may be done or suffered by reason of Contractor's negligence or failure to perform any contractual obligations. The Contractor shall indemnify and save harmless the City of Takoma Park, its employees, officials, and agents, from and against all losses, liabilities, claims, demands, damages, suits, costs and expenses of any kind, including attorney's fees and litigation expenses, suffered or incurred due to the contractor's negligence, tortuous act or omission, or failure to perform any of its contractual obligations.

The contractor must obtain at its own cost and expense, and keep in force and effect during the term of the contract with the City for the contract work, including all extensions, the insurance specified below, with an insurance company licensed or qualified to do business in the state of Maryland. A certificate of insurance must be submitted to the City prior to the commencement of any work under the contract and prior to any contract modification extending the term of the contract, as evidence of compliance with this provision. The City of Takoma Park must be named as an additional insured on all liability policies. A minimum of thirty (30) days written notice to the City of cancellation or material change in any of the policies is required. In no event may the insurance coverage be less than that shown below, unless the requirements of this section are waived, in whole or in part, in writing by the City Manager.